

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for providing secure electronic commerce transactions with multiple merchants comprising:

establishing a secure communication link between at least one client computer system and a vendor computer system;

transmitting transaction information between said client computer system and said vendor computer system enabling a user at said client computer system to select and purchase, via said vendor computer system, items listed in a merchant computer system by a plurality of merchants without said user having direct access to said merchant computer system; and

modifying responses from said merchant computer system to said client computer system at said vendor computer system thereby controlling information exchange between said merchant computer system and said client computer system through said vendor computer system; and

wherein modifying responses from said merchant computer system comprises:

modifying merchant content obtained from said merchant computer system to redirect one or more hyper-text elements to said vendor computer system; and

reframing said merchant content as a web page of said vendor computer system; and
wherein transmitting said transaction information comprises transmitting said web page of said vendor computer system to said client computer system.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said transmitting step further comprises:

generating a purchase order for said items after said user's selection of at least one of said items for purchase from said merchant computer system via said vendor computer system.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, further comprising:
obtaining payment from said user; and
transmitting payment to at least one of said plurality of merchants on behalf of said user.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, wherein said payment is obtained by an operator of said vendor computer system.

5-6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said step of transmitting transaction information further comprises:

displaying one or more icons corresponding to said plurality of merchants at said client computer for user selection; and

providing said items listed in said merchant computer system to said user at said client system computer via said vendor computer system, upon in response to said user selection of at least one of said one or more icons.

8. (Currently Amended) A method for performing secure electronic commerce with multiple merchants comprising:

establishing a secure communication link between a client computer system and a vendor computer system; and

transmitting transaction information between said client computer system and said vendor computer system enabling a user at said client computer system to obtain, via said vendor computer system, items listed in a plurality of merchant computer systems by one or more merchants without said user having direct access to said merchant computer system;

monitoring an information exchange between said client computer and said plurality of merchant computer systems at said vendor computer system to obtain said transaction information; and

modifying responses regarding said listed items from at least one of said plurality of merchant computer systems to said client computer system at said vendor computer system to route at least a portion of said information exchange through said vendor computer system.

wherein modifying said responses comprises:

modifying merchant content from said at least one of said plurality of merchant computer systems to redirect one or more hyper-text elements to said vendor computer system; and

reframing said merchant content as a web page of said vendor computer system; and

wherein transmitting said transaction information comprises transmitting said web page to said client computer for display to said user.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8, further comprising: generating a purchase order for said items.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein a vendor of said vendor computer system forwards payments to said one or more merchants for the supplied items on behalf of said user.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said user makes payment to said vendor for said supplied items.

12-13. (Cancelled)

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8, further comprising: displaying a merchant icon associated with at least one of said one or more merchants at said client computer system for selection by said user; and upon in response to said selection by said user of said merchant icon, providing a merchant list of items from at least one of said plurality of merchant computer systems to said user at said client computer system via said vendor computer system.

15. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said step of modifying responses occurs automatically.

16. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein said step of modifying responses occurs automatically.

17. (Currently Amended) A vendor computer system having computer readable program code embodied therein for implementing a vendor server to enable secure electronic commerce between a user at a client computer system and one or more merchant servers, said program code configured to perform at least the steps of:

establishing a secure communication link between a client computer system and a vendor server;

obtaining merchant content for items listed for sale from a merchant server;

controlling transactions transaction between said client computer system and said merchant server, said controlling comprising modifying hyper-text links in said merchant content to redirect said hyper-text links to said vendor server; and

reframing said merchant content as a web page of said vendor server; and
transmitting said web page with said merchant content and modified
hyper-text links to said client computer system for presentation to said user.

18. (Original) The vendor computer system of claim 17, wherein said step of obtaining said merchant content comprises:

receiving a user request from said client computer system;
transmitting said user request to said merchant server; and
receiving from said merchant server a response comprising said merchant content.

19. (Original) The vendor computer system of claim 18, wherein said step of receiving said user request comprises identifying said merchant server from a plurality of possible merchant servers.

20. (Original) The vendor computer system of claim 18, wherein said user request is an order request, and said step of transmitting said user request to said merchant server comprises inserting user order information into said order request.

21. (Original) The vendor computer system of claim 18, wherein said user request is one of:

a search request;
an order request; and
a selection request.

22. (Withdrawn) A vendor server comprising:

 a browser agent configured to interface with a user browser over a secure link;

 a server agent configured to interface with a plurality of merchant servers, said server agent further configured to:

 receive a request from said browser agent;

 transmit said request to a selected merchant server; and

 receive a response from said selected merchant server, said response comprising merchant content;

 a process engine configured to receive said merchant content from said server agent, said process engine further configured to:

 modify links in said merchant content to redirect said links to said vendor server; and

 reframe said merchant content with modified links and provide said reframed merchant content to said browser agent for transmission to said user browser.

23. (Withdrawn) The vendor server of claim 22, wherein said process engine comprises:

a hyper-text parser configured to parse said merchant content into one or more structural elements; and

a hyper-text processor configured to modify hyperlinks and forms in said structural elements, and reframe said structural elements as modified.

24. (Withdrawn) The vendor server of claim 22, further comprising a merchant database accessible by said process engine, said merchant database comprising merchant-specific information for processing responses from said plurality of merchant servers.

25. (Withdrawn) The vendor server of claim 22, further comprising a member database accessible by said process engine, said member database comprising user-specific information.

26. (Withdrawn) A method for providing secure electronic commerce transactions between a client computer and one or more merchant servers via a vendor server, wherein said vendor server performs a plurality of steps comprising:

providing a secure link between a client computer and a vendor server;

in response to a user request received from said client computer, obtaining merchant content from a specified merchant server; modifying said merchant content to redirect one or more hyper-text elements to said vendor server; reframing said merchant content as a web page of said vendor server; and transmitting said web page to said client computer.

27. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26, further comprising maintaining a member database comprising credit and address information of one or more users.

28. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26, further comprising maintaining a merchant database comprising merchant-specific information of said plurality of merchant servers.

29. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26, wherein:
said user request comprises a request for merchant inventory information; and
said merchant content comprises a list of merchant items from said specified merchant server.

30. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26, wherein:

said user request comprises a request for merchant inventory information;
and
said merchant content comprises a list of merchant services from said specified merchant server.

31. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26, wherein:

said user request comprises a search request; and
said merchant content comprises a list of merchant items responsive to said search request.

32. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26, wherein:

said user request comprises a search request; and
said merchant content comprises a list of merchant services responsive to said search request.

33. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26, further comprising providing a vendor web page to said user computer wherein said vendor web page comprises one or more items offered by said vendor independent of said one or more merchants.

34. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26, further comprising providing a vendor web page to said user computer wherein said vendor web page comprises one or more services offered by said vendor independent of said one or more merchants.

35. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26, wherein said user request is an order request, said method further comprising:
framing said order request; and
obtaining member and merchant information from a vendor database to complete said order request.

36. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26, further comprising:
receiving a single payment from a user;
providing individual payments to each of a plurality of merchant servers from which at least one item was ordered by said user.

37. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 26, wherein modifying said merchant content comprises at least one of the following steps:
redirecting hyperlinks to said vendor server;
redirecting forms to said vendor server; and
redirecting post and get commands through said vendor server.

38. (Currently Amended) A vendor server process executed in a vendor server computer system, comprising:

means for establishing a secure communication link between a client computer system and a vendor server;

means for obtaining merchant content from a merchant server;

means for controlling transactions ~~transaction~~ between said client computer system and said merchant server ~~comprising comprising~~:

means for modifying hyperlinks ~~links~~ in said merchant content to redirect said hyperlinks ~~links~~ to said vendor server; and

means for reframing said merchant content as a web page of said vendor server; and

means for transmitting said web page ~~merchant content and modified~~ ~~links~~ to said client computer system for presentation to a user.